Falta EPZ	24.04	22.12
Vizag EPZ	0.89	—
Total	3235.63	3551.16

Lifting curbs on imports

3221. PROF. RAM KAPSE: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any meeting of the World Trade Organisation for lifting curbs on imports of the world was held in January, 1997;

(b) whether any demand was made to India in the said meeting to lift restrictions on imports; and

(c) if so, by whom and the action taken in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULI RAMAIAH): (a) to (c) At the consultations held by the Committee on Balance of Payments Restrictions of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) with India in January, 1997 under Article XVIII:B of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), 1994, many member countries were of the view that the present balance of payments situation of India did not warrant a continuation of import restrictions under the cover of balance of payments provisions of Article XVIII:B The International Monetary Fund (IMF), in its report to the Committee, stated that India's current monetary reserves were not inadequate and that there was no threat of a serious decline in India's monetary reserves.

The Committee agreed to resume consultations in the week beginning 2 June, 1997. The entire issue of removal of quantitative restrictions maintained for balance of payment purposes is under inter-ministerial discussion.

Increase in Indian exports to East Asian countries

3222. SHRI YERRA NARAYANASWAMY: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India's exports to East Asian Countries has increased in recent years;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) what further steps are proposed to increase exports to East Asian Countries during the next five years; and

(d) the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULI RAMAIAH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) India's exports to East Asian countries during the last 3 years were as under:—

Year	Exports (in US $ Mn.)	Growth over the previous year
1993-94	1981.71	31%
1994-95	2326.27	17%
1995-96	3177.77	37%

(c) and (d) Government is constantly exploring the possibilities for boosting trade with these countries by holding bilateral discussions at various institutional fora like joint Trade Committee, Joint Ministeral Commission etc. In addition, the Chambers of Commerce of respective countries are encouraged to interact through Joint Business Councils for trade facilitation. Participation in trade fairs and exhibition, exchange of business and official delegations are being undertaken for trade promotion and to bridge the information gap wherever it exists.